

"General Nathaniel Taylor House"  
E. of Johnson City-Highway #87,  
Carter County, Tennessee.

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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
District of Tennessee

Historic American Buildings Survey  
J. Frazer Smith, District Officer  
W. Jeter Eason-Deputy District Officer  
404 Goodwyn Institute Building  
Memphis, Tennessee.

"GENERAL NATHANIEL TAYLOR HOUSE"  
East of Johnson City - State Highway #67  
Carter County, Tennessee.

Owner. Carey Taylor. Occupant - Robert Mottern,  
Route #2, Elizabethton, Tennessee (Tenant).

Date of Erection. About 1815.

Architect. Unknown. Believed to have been from  
Philadelphia.

Builder. Brigadier General Nathaniel Taylor.

Present Condition. Due to the fact that the present owner rents this house along with surrounding land to tenant farmers there has been no interested preservation of the house, but, considering the lack of care, the house appears to be capable of standing a good many years in its present condition. Like practically all other houses that were built at that time out of logs it has been completely covered with clapboard siding. This it seems was added only a few years after the house was built at which time a delicate fan-light entrance motif was added. We are led to believe also by the nature of the interior woodwork and the stories told about it that the interior trim was also added at this same time. There are no outbuildings standing that appear to be original. As can be seen by the accompanying photographs the house is being kept livable to a certain extent and could be restored for a comparatively small amount of money. The roof, of course, is not original since it is galvanized iron raised seams replacing hand split shingles.

Number of Stories. The house is principally a two story dwelling with one story service wing forming an "L" to the rear, this being more or less typical of that period.

Materials of Construction. Foundation of native stone quarried in the vicinity. Floors hand hewn timber joists and hand made random width pine finish. Interior trim consists of hand wrought pine gracefully executed. Exterior walls log with clapboard siding. Interior partitions wood stud. Roof galvanized iron replacing split shingles.

Other Existing Records. A very complete history of the house is in the files of Judge Sam Williams, Johnson City,

Tennessee and so far as determinable there are no other existing records accessible.

Additional Data. The General Nathaniel Taylor House is considered by Judge Williams to be one of the most outstanding landmarks in the State of Tennessee due to the fact that while it is the home of General Taylor it is also an excellent example of workmanship or craftsmanship in interior trim. It seems to reflect a person of strong character, wealth and discrimination. It is said that General Taylor employed a Philadelphia Architect, whose name we do not know, and on careful inspection it appears that this Architect may have been influenced by the architecture of Williamsburg, Virginia. This is evidenced by the use of "marbleized" wood wainscoting in the stair hall and along the wall following up the stairs. This is the first and only example that we have found in the State of Tennessee where the practice of "obvious imitation" has been used as applied in the Capitol Building at Williamsburg. We have no tangible proof that the Architect was so influenced by the Capitol Building at Williamsburg, but the execution closely resembles the execution as restored. The walls are finished in wood paneling; the wood joints being camfered and forming a very neat finish. Mantles are delicately and almost elaborately carved as illustrated by one of the accompanying photographs. The house played an important part inasmuch as it housed its builder, General Nathaniel Taylor. The General came to the State of Tennessee as a boy in 1780. He must have inherited or made considerable money for it appears that he was a gentleman of considerable means. His first entry into State politics was evidenced by his becoming the first Sheriff of Carter County in 1796 after the creation of Carter County. This being also the year of the first Legislature in the State of Tennessee and which is therefore the birth date of the State; it having been formed out of the territory of Franklin. It seems that General Taylor had considerable military experience prior to the War of 1812, however, we do not know here just what experience that consisted of. He entered the War of 1812 and was in that war in the capacity of Brigadier General. Shortly after his return from the war in about 1815 he built his house which is the subject of this survey. He had a son, James Patton Taylor, who in turn had a son, Nathaniel Green Taylor, having been named for General Green of Revolutionary War fame and who was the father of Bob and Alf Taylor, both of whom became respectively Governors of the State of Tennessee.

Rev. Aug. 25. '36 T.T.W.

